6. d.

MERCY

In the midst of

JUDGMENT:

By a gracious discovery of a certain Remedy for

LONDON'S

Languishing TRADE.

In a Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable, the Lord Mayor and the Citizens of *London*, on *September* 12. 1669. at the new repaired Chappel at *Guild-Hall*.

By *D. BARTON*, M. A. and Rector of Saint *Margarets* New Fish-street, *London*.

LONDON,

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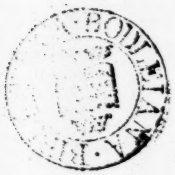

To the Right Honourable,

Sir *SAMUEL STARLING*

Knight,

Lord Mayor of the City of

LONDON,

AND

The Court of *ALDERMEN.*

Right Honourable,

THIS *Sermon, ſavouring of the Countrey, in which it was conceived, and brought forth, without the Midwifry of a Library (my own periſhing in the*

ſame Flames with your City, and the place of my now reſidence not affording an aſſiſtant) was intended onely for your religious ears, in them to have both its birth and buriall; but ſince it hath pleaſed you to reprieve it to a longer and more publick life, where ſhould it be more juſtly laid than at your doors? who for your able parts and endowments have been fitted for the publick imployment, and intruſted with the weightieſt affairs of this City; and who by your Favour and Countenance are able to cover the rawneſs, and rudeneſs, or what other defects in my weake and unworthy handling ſo neceſſary a ſubject. I have in publiſhing it, regarded more your Opinion than my own conceipt; and I hope (becauſe you think ſo) that the matter will not be altogether unprofitable, or unſeaſonable; although it be not handled ſo artificially, and rhetorically

torically as it ought, my main ſtudy being to be plain and to apply the things delivered to the preſent times: whatever it be, (and I wiſh it much better) it is now no more mine but yours; and if under the beames of your goodneſs, it ſhall ſo thrive, as to become an Inſtrument for the furthering that important Work mentioned in it; next under God your Honour and your worſhipful aſſeſſors are to have the Praiſe, and I therein ſhall receive a ſufficient reward of my labour; accounting it my greateſt happineſs on earth, to have been able to performe any acceptable ſervice to that Royal City, to which for many yeares paſt, and my whole life for the future, I have dedicated all my endeavours. I will not detain your Honour, &c. any longer from your more publick and ſerious affaires, but only beſeech the Almighty and All-wiſe

God,

God, that he would give you under-ſtanding and valiant hearts to manage them Couragiouſly and Prudently, that you may be inſtruments in Gods hand for the making up the breaches in our Syon and Jeruſalem; which is, and ſhall be the dayly Prayer of,

Your Honours and Worſhips

unfainedly devoted, in all

Chriſtian duty and

Obſervance,

DAV: BARTON.

Haggai I. 9.

Ye looked for much, and loe, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it; Why, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts? Becauſe of mine Houſe that is waſte, and ye run every Man unto his owne Houſe.

SOme Geographers have obſerved that there is no Land ſo placed in the World, but from that Land a man may veiw ſome other Land: though between Land and Land you may ſee Seas enraged with ſtormes and tempeſts, yet land is ſtill within ken. An obſervation, perhaps, of more curioſity

than verity in the material Sea of this World: yet moſt certain if it be applyed to the miſtical Sea of Gods Judgments, (which the Royal Prophet compares to a great deep) and the dry land of his mercy: though between mercy, and mercy God interpoſeth a raging Ocean of trouble and calamity, raiſed by the ſtorme of his indignation, ſo that men ſeeme to be in the condition of the material world, *Gen.* 7. When the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hils that were under the whole Heaven were covered.

Pſa. 36. 6.

Omnia pontus erant, deerant quoque littora Ponto.

All was a Sea and that Sea had no ſhores, yet if they looke but onward they cannot miſs of a proſpect of dry land, of Mercy. The Almighty God hath ſo interwoven theſe two in the diſpenſation of his providence, that the one is never diſcernable without the other. When God landeth his people in the Haven of proſperity,

he

he would have them look back on the tempeſtuous Sea from which they are eſcaped, and fear his Juſtice: when he lancheth them forth into the depth of miſery he carries them not out of ſight of land, that there may be hope of mercy. Thus doth the moſt Gracious God in the midſt of Judgment remember Mercy, and giveth even the vally of *Achor*, the vally of trouble for a door of hope, and in the deepeſt Ocean of his Judgments, diſcovers a little Iſland of Mercy to repaire to. And thus did he of old deal with his People the Jewes; He cauſed the King of *Babylon* to ariſe like waters out of the North, and to become an overflowing flood, and to overflow the land and all that was therein, whereby they were ſwept away into Captivity; yet then when theſe waters did ſo overflow their heads that they ſaid they were cut off, the all-merciful God lifted up their heads, and ſhewed them a proſpect of mercy, by a faithful promiſe of delive-

Hoſ. 2 15.

Jer. 47. 2.

Lam. 3. 54.

rance after ſeventy years: at which harbour they are no ſooner arrived, but their ſins provoke God to bring them back into the Sea of his Judgments, and he afflicts them with famine, *ye have ſown much and bring in little: ye eat but have not enough: ye drinke but ye are not filled with drinke*: &c. verſ. 6. of this Chapter; Yet even here though the Sea roared, and the Heaven was black with Clouds, that God which gave to the Sea his decree, ſaying, Thus far ſhalt thou go and no farther, and there thy proud waves ſhall be ſtaied; not only diſcovers a *Cape of good Hope*, and makes a path in that mighty water for his ranſomed to paſs to it, *Go up to the Mountain, and bring wood, and build the Houſe: and I will take pleaſure in it, and I will be glorified, ſaith the Lord*, verſ. 8: but alſo gives them a faithful repreſentation of their preſent ſtate and condition, with the by-path that brought them into it, that ſo they might be induced to conſider their waies, and leave them

them and return into the way of peace, and this he doth in the words of my Text: *Ye looked for much, and loe it comes to little, &c.*

So that my Text is made up of the two parts of *Davids* Song, *Pſalm* 101. 1. *Mercy*, and *Judgment*, which in God are alwayes twiſted together, *Gracious and righteous is the Lord, Pſal.* 25. 8. *and all his pathes are mercy and truth*, v. 10. Not one path of mercy, and another of truth, but every path mercy, and truth both. The red Croſs of his Juſtice (as in your City Armes) is born on the white Field of his mercy: as theſe therefore were the burden of *David's* Ditty, ſo they muſt be the ſupport of my Meditations, and the object of your Attentions *Judgment* and *Mercy*, the former included in the very words of my Text, the latter in the deſigne and ſcope of thoſe words.

And firſt of the *Judgment*, that ſo I may end with that, which is not onely

the end of all our aimes, and desires, but of all Gods Judgments too, and that is Mercy.

In the Judgment we may consider,

First, The Judgment it self, which was *Famine*.

Secondly, The Author of it, *the Lord of Hosts*.

Thirdly, The cause moving God to it, *the neglect of Gods House*.

The Judgment very *dreadfull*, the inflicter most *powerful*, the cause provoking exceeding *sinful*.

And *first* of the Judgment, which we shall consider, first in it's nature:

Secondly, In it's severity.

First, Of the nature of it, it was Famine, a generall want of the supports of this life, because of the failing of the creature, both in the production and breeding; *Ye sow much and bring in little*: and in the vigour, and nourishing power of them; *ye eat, but are not satisfied.* And this is a sore, and dreadfull Judgment, *King David*

David choſeth the Peſtilence as the leſſer evil, which yet was ſo deſtructive, that there died of the people in leſs then three daies ſpace, threeſcore and ten thouſand men, of whoſe deſtructive nature too, he could not be ignorant, having an inſtance in the law of Moſes (wherein he meditated day and night) of three and twenty thouſand ſlain by it, while *Aaron* was putting incenſe into the Cenſer; And as he prefers the Peſtilence, ſo the Prophet *Jeremy*, the Sword: *They that be ſlain with the ſword, are better than they that be ſlain with hunger: for theſe pine away, ſtricken through for want of the fruits of the field.* Lam. 4. 9. and yet the Sword makes a deplorable deſolation; take it in the words of the prophet Joel: *A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a deſolate wilderneſs, yea and nothing ſhall eſcape them.* 2 Sam. 24.

Neither is it leſs diſmal in its effects, for

for neceſſity is an hard weapon, and want will make a man part with any thing: *fourſcore pieces of Silver* (ten pound ſterling) *for an Aſſes head, and five pieces of Silver* (12 *s.* and 6 *d.*) *for the fourth part of a Kab* (which is but halfe a pint) *of Doves dung*, 2. King. 6. 25. The Ægyptians who were famous, or rather infamous for their covetouſneſs, yet can part with all their mony for Corn. *Gen.* 47. It not only makes men forget common humanity, for the people are ready to ſtone *Moſes*, who had done ſo great things for them, when they are ready to ſtarve, *Exod.* 17: but it diſſolves all the bonds of nature, making men to eat, not only dogs, cats, and rats, but one another; *pone pretium humanæ carni*, was a proclamation in *Rome* in *Honorius* daies. And in *England An.* 1316. Men did eat one another, and thieves newly brought into the Goale were torn in pieces and eaten halfe alive, by them that had been longer in: nay it ſtifles natural affection. In this Famine

of my Text, the Jewes ſold their Sons and their Daughters for bond-ſlaves to buy Corne ; And in the before mentioned, in *Samaria* Parents did devour their own Children. The Prophet *Eſay* foretels of one, wherein every man ſhould eat the fleſh of his owne arme ; And our Chronicles tell us of one in *England* about *An.* 700. So violent that not only many dyed for hunger, but great numbers joyned hand in hand 40 or 50 in a company, and threw themſelves headlong into the Sea.

Neh. 5. 5.

Iſa. 9. 19.

But we ſhall better underſtand how ſad, and dreadful this Judgment was, if we ſhall conſider it in relation to ſeveral circumſtances hinted in the Text.

The firſt whereof is the country afflicted, a moſt plentiful and fruitful land, A land like not only the Garden of Eden, but the Garden of God, full of all kind of pleaſant and delightful fruits ; which cannot be deſcribed more fully, and ſignally, than *Moſes* hath done it to our hands : *Deut.* 8. 7. *A good land, a land of brooks of waters,*

of fountaines and depths that ſpring out of the Vallies. A land of Wheat and Barly, and Vines, and Figtrees, and Pomegranats: a land of Oyle-olive, and Hony: A land wherein they might eat bread without ſcarceneſs: a land whoſe Stones were Iron, and out of whoſe Hils they might dig Braſs. And again, *c.* 32. 13. *A land wherein they might ſuck Honey out of the Rocks, and Oyl out of the flinty Rocks; Butter of Kine, and Milk of Sheep, with Fat of Lambs, and Rams of the breed of Baſhan, and Goats, with the fat of Kidnies of Wheat, and drink the pure blood of the Grape.* A Land which had not only plenty for it ſelf, but bounty
Act 12. 20. for others: For the Country of *Tyre*, was nouriſhed by this Country. That this fruitfull Land ſhould become barren; that this Paradiſe ſhould be turned into a Wilderneſs; that there ſhould be ſcarcity in ſuch a fruitfull Land, is the firſt aggravating circumſtance.

The *ſecond* is, That it was National, univerſal, an over-ſpreading Famine; a comprehenſive Judgment, like a Chain-ſhot bearing

bearing all before it, reaching to all men, the great and good, as well the mean and wicked: *Zerubbabel* the Governour, and *Joſhua* the High Prieſt; for to them the Prophet ſpeaks, verſe 1. They are included in this, *Ye look for much*, &c. Wiſedom, Riches, or Strength may ſecure from other annoyances, but Scarcity, and Famine ſtrike at the Life of every man. The King as well as the Clown muſt beg for daily bread; and the profit of the Earth is for all. That the King himſelf is ſerved by the Field, was wiſe *Solomons* obſervation. And King *Ahab* may be an evidence of it; who in time of Dearth could not help himſelf, much leſs others, out of the Barn-floor, or out of the Wine-preſs. Even the Saints have their ſhare, and portion in it, as being parts, and members of that people which is to be puniſhed; and though not actors in thoſe groſs impieties which kindle the fire of Gods vengeance, yet are guilty of ſins, though of a ſmaller nature, which add to the fewel of Gods wrath. *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, Eccl. 5. 9. 2. King 6. 27.

though perhaps not themſelves in fault, or at leaſt not ſo much, for they were both very Religious, yet becauſe not ſo forward, and putting forth as they ſhould have been, are lyable to the common Judgment.

The *third* Character of the Severity of this Judgment, was the ſeaſon of it, which was immediatly after their returne from the *Babylonian* Captivity; They had but a very little breathing ſpace from the burden of that Yoake, when God laies on an heavyer: there, to uſe *Jeroboams* expreſſion, 1 King. 12. 14. they were Chaſtiſed with Whips but here with Scorpions. There, very probably, they had meat after their labour, and though they trod out the Corn, their mouths were not muzled, their maſters ſometimes lifted up the Yoake, and ſet meat before them. As in *Ægypt*, although they had hard Taskes, and cruel Task-maſters, yet they had their Fleſhpots, and their Garlicks, and their Onyons to the full; bnt now they labour, and have nothing to eat, thus the Meſſengers of ill newes, as to *Job*, did throng upon

upon them, one at the heeles of another, which was none of the ſmalleſt aggravations of this Calamity, that it followed ſo immediatly on the neck of the other.

The *fourth* marke of the Severity of this Judgment, was the fruſtration of their hopes, and expectations: *Ye looked for much, and loe, it came to little.* If hope deferred makes the heart ſick. *Prov.* 13. 12. Hope fruſtrate, and loſt, can do no leſſe then breake it. When men thinke themſelves ſure, as *Eſau* did of the bleſſing, and it then failes them, this is matter of bitter weeping. For God to take away the Corn in the time thereof, and the Wine in the ſeaſon thereof, that is juſt at harveſt, when it is to be inned: when the old ſtore is ſpent, and they looke for a new recruit, then to have the meat cut from their mouths, and the morſel from between their teeth, then to have their hopes defeated, high-tens the miſery.

A *fifth* print of the Severity of this Judgment, was the loſs of their labour.

It

It is very frequent, and ſcarce ever otherwiſe, to ſee the Sluggards hopes blaſted; he that will not ſow in Winter, can never promiſe himſelfe to reap in Harveſt; but after Plowing, Sowing, nay Reaping too, and bringing home, to find but little, that adds to the weight of the want: Nothing ſo much diſcontents men as labour in vain; to take paines, and to ſee nothing come of it, is enough to make a Pro-
Iſa. 49. 4. phet complain; to labour all night in fiſhing, and take nothing may tempt an Apoſtle to deſiſt. To labour in the fire, and to weary themſelves for vanity, to loſe *oleum & operam*, coſt and paines, is ſufficient to bring men to deſperation; Eſpecially when that little which is coming in, doth no good; when God blows on it, and takes away the nouriſhing virtues, ſo that either men dare not eat their fill, for feare of want another day; or if they do eat, the Staffe of bread being broken for want of Gods concurrence, they are not ſatisfie d A Boulimy, or Canine appetite, being a diſeaſe

diſeaſe common at ſuch times, when in the fulneſs of their ſufficiency (as *Zophar* in *Job* ſpeaks of the wicked) they are in ſtreights; that little is ſo far from abating, that it encreaſeth the Calamity: And ſo much for the firſt Particular, the Judgment with the Severity of it. *Job.* 20. 22.

The *Second* thing is the Author of this Judgment. *I did blow upon it, Saith the Lord of Hoſts. Shall there be Evil in the City, and I have not done it,* Saith God himſelfe, *Am.* 3.6. God Challengeth the execution of Juſtice to himſelfe; not only at the Laſt Day, but in this world, and it is as agreeable to his nature now, as it will be hereafter. It is not luck, or fortune that toſſeth or tumbleth things below; but God ſits at the ſtern, and ſteers the affairs of this World. The Genealogy of all the good creatures is reſolved by God into himſelf, *Hoſ.* 2. 21. Unleſs he hear the Heavens, and the Heavens hear the Earth, no Corn, or Wine, or Oyle can be expected. The Earth is a kind Mother, yet it cannot

open

open her bowels to yield ſeed to the ſower, or bread to the eater, if it be not watered from above. The Heavens are the Storehouſes of Gods good treaſure, which he openeth to mans profit and nouriſhment, yet they cannot drop down fatneſs on the earth, if God cloſe it up, and with-hold the ſeaſonable ſhowers, which he can do if he pleaſe, and will do, if he be provoked.

Firſt, He can do it eaſily.

Secondly, He will do it juſtly.

Firſt, He can do it eaſily. It is but his blowing upon it, and it is done. As he made all things, ſo he can diſſolve them by the breath of his mouth. *He hideth his face, and the creatures are troubled; he taketh away their breath and they dye. He ſendeth forth his breath and they are created, and reneweth the face of the Earth. He turneth man to deſtruction, and again he ſaith, come again ye children of men.* And this he can do ſo eaſily becauſe he is the *Lord of Hoſts*; a title frequently uſed by theſe three laſt Prophets, *Haggai*, *Zachary*, and *Malachy*, who propheſying

Pſa. 104. 29. 30.

Pſa. 90. 3.

pheſying after the *Jews* return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, when their ſtate was at the loweſt, ſcarce ever name God by any other title; to denote unto them, how eaſie it was for him to bring his Judgments upon them, and to remove them again; all creatures being at his command as *Lord of Hoſts*; and like the Centurions Servants, if he ſay to one, *Go, hee goeth, to another, Come, hee cometh: and to a third, Do this, hee doth it.* When he will do a thing, who ſhall hinder him? Nature may be reſiſted, and ſtopped in her courſe; Men and Devils, though never ſo potent, may want of their will, and be croſſed in their deſignes and deſires; but the *Lord of Hoſts* doth whatſoever he will, both in Heaven and Earth without controul or contradiction. Mat. 8. 9.

Secondly, He will do it juſtly. Gods Judgments are not alwaies manifeſt, they are alwaies juſt. And he may ſay as *David* to his Brethren in another caſe; *What have I now done? is there not a cauſe?* God never puniſheth a People: but there is a juſt 1. Sam. 17. 29.

cauſe for it, and could men but ſee it, the root of the matter would be found in
Job. 19.28. themſelves. It is the Plague of their own hearts, that procures them all their miſchief; and this might have been put among the aggravations of the Judgment, that it is from themſelves that they are the cauſe of their own ruine; that they may thank themſelves, and blame their ſin, as the Mother of their miſery, and cauſe of their Calamity, *O Iſrael thou haſt deſtroyed thy*
Hos. 13.9. *ſelf*, Saith God. So that there is no
Lam. 3.36. ground of complaint: *why ſhould a living man complain: a man for the puniſhment of his ſin?* Had man never been ſinful, he had never been miſerable; had he never lift up his heart againſt Heaven to provoke, God, God had never lift up his hand on earth to puniſh man. If theſe *Jewes* would but have conſidered their own waies, as God himſelfe exhorts them twice in a breath, *vers* 5. and 7. They might have eaſily found the Serpent that bit them, to be lurking in their own boſom; *the contempt*

and

and neglect of Gods worſhip, which brings me to

The *Third* particular, The cauſe of this Judgment, *why ſaith the Lord of Hoſts? &c.*

Wherein three things offer themſelves to our Conſideration:

Firſt, The ſin it's ſelfe, Gods Houſe lyes waſt.

Secondly, The Aggravation of that ſin, Ye run every man to his own houſe.

Thirdly, The Proportion between the ſin, and the puniſhment.

Firſt, The ſin it ſelfe, is, that Gods Houſe is ſuffered to lie waſt. This Houſe, which God Challengeth to himſelf, as his own poſſeſſion, was that glorious fabrick of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, built by King *Solomon*, and conſecrated by him to Gods immediate worſhip, and which God was pleaſed to accept of, and wherein he promiſeth to dwell for ever. *This is my reſt for ever, here will I dwell, for I have deſired it*, ſaith God. Although he be the *Pſa.* 132. 14.

high and lofty one, that inhabiteth Eternity whoſe name is Holy; Although he be infinite, and Comprehended in no place, and ſo dwelleth not in Temples made with hands: yet it was his good pleaſure, that *Solomon* ſhould build him an houſe, wherein as to his manifeſtative preſence, he was reſolved to dwell more eſpecialy among his people the Children of *Iſrael*, whither he would have the Tribes goe up,

Pſal. 122. 4. *the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Teſtimony of Iſrael to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.* And this he calls his houſe. *My Houſe*, ſaith he, *ſhall be called the Houſe of Prayer*, and in my Text, *Becauſe of my Houſe, which is waſt.*

Waſt, the Hebrew word ſignifies properly *dryed up.* A ſimilitude taken from a piece of ground, dried up, and parched by the Sun, ſo that nothing is able to grow in it, and is uſed by the Holy Ghoſt to expreſs an extreame deſolation, and deſtruction. *His ſpring ſhall become dry, and his foundation dryed up*, ſaith the Prophet

Hoſea

Hoſea of *Samaria*, when he *would* ſet forth their utter ruine: ſo that their *ſin* was the permitting Gods Houſe to lie in it's ruines, and not repaire it. Hoſ. 13. 15.

And it is obſervable that theſe *Jewes* had not demoliſhed it themſelves, they had not laid it waſt; that was done by *Necuchadnezzar*, and his Officers, it was they which ſet fire to the Temple, theſe had no hand at all in it: and yet it is looked on as a *ſin* in them, that it is waſt. Not only pulling down Churches, but not repairing, when God gives oportunity is a *ſin*. *Omiſſions* are ſins with God, as well as *Commiſſions*. It was the rich mans ruine, not that he robbed the poor, but that he did not relieve them. Faſting as well as fulneſs may breed diſeaſes, and make work for the *Sexton* or *Phyſitian*. Not onely the commiſſion of evill ſinks men to Hell, but the omiſſion of goodneſs. The Fig-tree had no bad fruit on it, and yet was curſed becauſe it had none at all; the forbearance of wickedneſs is not enough to acquit the ſoul, un-

leſs there be a performance of Righteouſneſs. Theſe *Jews* are condemned, not for waſting *Gods* Houſe, but letting it lye waſte. That's the *firſt*, the ſin.

The *Second* thing is the aggravation of this, by their ſelf ſeeking. *Ye run every man to his own Houſe*, or, *Ye take pleaſure every man in his own Houſe:* Ye are all ſelf-ſeekers, private-ſpirited perſons, all for your own Intereſt, none for the honour and glory of *God*. They were like the Tortoyſe, *Toti in ſe*, wholly drawn up into themſelves, and inſenſible of the publike good, or common danger ofChurch and Religion: Far from *Nehemiah*'s temper, who drowned all ſelfe-reſpect in *Gods* glory, and the publick good; far from true goodneſs, which will be publick ſpirited, although it be to private diſadvantage: And if nature will venture its own particular good for the general, as heavy things will aſcend, to keep out a vacuity and preſerve the Univerſe; much more will grace make men in all their deſires and deſigns to ſtudy Gods end more then their own,

own, and as *Solomon* did to build Gods Houſe firſt, and afterward their own; and not like theſe *Jews*, who ſo themſelves were warm in their Feathers, in their own houſes, never did regard the ruines of Gods Houſe.

Secondly, This ſelf-ſeeking is aggravated in two particulars; *Firſt*, In the perſons guilty; and *Secondly*, In their earneſtneſs in that guilt.

Firſt, In the perſons guilty. The *firſt* univerſally; *Secondly*, Emphatically.

Firſt, *Ye*; univerſally; every man of you, even the beſt of you, *Zerubbabel*, and *Joſhua* too. When all Fleſh have corrupted their way, when all the foundations are out of courſe, when as in *Sodom*, all the people from every quarter, both old and young, are guilty; no wonder then that God puniſheth. When not onely private men, but publick run into the ſame ſin, it is then incorrigible as to man, thoſe that ſhould puniſh it being themſelves guilty, and therefore then it is time for God to lay to his hand; for private men to have private ſpirits

rits and to run every man to his own Houſe, to mind their own particular good, is no ſuch rare thing, but for publick perſons to have private aims, to have ſuch narrow ſouls as to mind themſelves only, this is an aggravation of the crime.

Secondly, *Ye*, emphatically; Ye that are ſo much concerned in it, when others not ſo much, or not at all concerned in it, have been ſo zealous. When *Cyrus* and *Darius*, a payr of outlandiſh, and Heathen Kings, ſhall not onely give leave to the *Jews* to return to their Countrey, and build both their City and Temple, but alſo reſtore the Veſſels and Jewels, which had been taken from it, and allow the expences of the building out of their own Revenues; and ſupply them with Sacrifices, with a check to all Adverſaries; be ye far from thence, and a peremptory Decree, That whoſoever ſhould alter that ſentence, that the Wood ſhould be pulled down from his Houſe and he hanged thereon; And laſtly, a direful imprecation on all thoſe, whether Kings

or

or People, that ſhould put their hands to alter and deſtroy the Houſe of God which is in *Jeruſalem*; the Hiſtory whereof you may read at large in the books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; when theſe ſhall thus zealouſly, and earneſtly promote the work, and the *Jews* themſelves univerſally, who were moſt concerned, be careleſs and negligent, this is a firſt aggravation of the ſin.

A *Second* is their diligence and earneſtneſs in their own private intereſt, *Ye run every man, &c.* When ye do not ſo much as creep, crawl, or go to Gods Houſe. They thought no time, no labour, no coſt, too much for their own Houſes; and every little portion of either of them too much for Gods. The leaſt coſt is eſteemed miſpent, ſaying with *Judas*, *To what purpoſe is this waſt*; the lazyeſt labour is accounted loſt. *It is in vain to ſerve the Lord, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances*, ſay theſe very men, *Mal.* 3. 14. The ſhorteſt time is thought caſt away; *The time is not come, The time that the Lords Houſe ſhould be*

built, ſay they, *verſ.* 2. They followed the buſineſs of their own Houſes earneſtly and induſtriouſly, but of Gods very negligently; which, if nothing elſe, were enough to condemn them.

The *third* conſiderable in the ſin, is the proportion between that and the puniſhment, they leave Gods Houſe, *Chareb*, *waſt*; חָרֵב חָרֵב חָרֵב God, *verſ.* 11. cals for *Chereb*, *a drought*, or as the Septuagint probably read it, *Choreb*, *a Sword*, which ſhall in like manner lay their Land waſt, and their Houſes deſolate, they had pinched on Gods ſide, and he pays them home in the ſame kind, they thought in the Famine to have kept the more for themſelves; and they had leſs for keeping from him, that which was his own. A juſt hand of God upon all ſuch, who think every thing too much for his ſervice, for the moſt part they are alwayes in want and needy, their wealth melting away like Snow before the Sun. The Merchant that denyes to pay his Cuſtoms, forfeits all his Commodities; they forfeit their own portion, who with-

with-hold Gods from him. God tames his Prodigals, and ſtarves their bodies, who by neglect of his worſhip ſtarve their owne ſouls; God denies the ſame external things to them which they deny to Gods Houſe.

But might not theſe *Jews* have pleaded againſt this Sentence, and charged God with too much ſeverity, ſaying with their Forefathers, *The way of the Lord is not equal? What is this Temple more then another place? Cannot we worſhip God in any Houſe as well as this? Is not God a ſpirit, and will be worſhiped in ſpirit and truth*; and that we may do in any Mountain as well as this? Joh 4. 24.

Whereunto although it might be a ſufficient anſwer to ſay with S. *Paul*, *O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* Shall ſinful man plead with his Maker? Yet becauſe this malapert ſaucineſs is the temper of many in this age, as well as that; that the moſt juſt God may be juſtified when he ſpeaketh, and clear when he judgeth, we may take notice Rom. 9. 20.

of the equity of it, by a twofold consideration; *First*, Of the nature of the place; and *Secondly*, Of the nature of the punishment,

First, Gods equity will be cleared from the nature of the place, which was,

First, A visible sign and token of Gods more immediate and gracious presence; for although God dwels not in Temples made with hands; that is, so as we dwell in our Houses to be comprehended in them, yet God is sayd to dwell there where he manifests himself; and therefore what was done before the Temple, was sayd to be done before God; called therefore, *The Throne of his Glory*; *The place of his rest*; *The place of his habitation*; *His dwelling place*: Now we know that affronts offered to the Kings Chayre of State although in his absence, are as much resented as when he is present.

Jer. 14. 21. *Psa.* 132. 14. *Psa* 76. 2.

Secondly, That House was the choisest, and chiefest instrument of Gods worship in the Jewish administration, they were to direct all their worship towards it: It was the

the King of Heavens Court of Requests, which he had appointed for the hearing their prayers, and granting their Petitions; and which had the priviledge of an universally gracious audience; *In this place will I give peace*, saith the Lord, *c.* 2. 9. Now because the honour done to any part of Gods service reflects on himself; as those that offered any polluted bread on Gods Altar are sayd to despise his name, therefore to punish this offence so grievously could be no over much severity.

Thirdly, That House was a type of *Christ*, it was a sacred Mystery representing their *Messiah* to them, who was the true Temple made without hands; as himselfe makes the application, *John* 2. 19. *Destroy this Temple, and after three dayes I will raise it up*; which S. *John* who was his beloved Disciple, and lay in his bosome, interprets as meant of his own body, *Vers.* 21. *He spake of the Temple of his body*; And this the Apostle asserts at large, in the ninth Chap. of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. *Jesus Christ* was that true Temple in which the God-head dwelt bodily; that is, *really*, *fully*,

ſubſtantially; by the neereſt union, and moſt intimate conjunction as the ſoul dwels in the body; and ſo the neglect was the neglect of *Chriſt* himſelf.

Fourthly, That place was the ſpring-head of all their bleſſings; God had made that the
Exod. 20. 24 ſtaple of all his favours; *In all places where I record my name, I will come to thee and bleſs thee.* From whence it is that in Scripture, Gods bleſſings are not ſaid to be given from Heaven immediatly, but from *Syon* the place of *Gods* worſhip: *There the Lord commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore*, *Pſal.* 133. 3. *And the Lord that made Heaven and Earth, bleſs thee out of Syon*, *Pſal.* 134. 3. The Ocean of bleſſing is in *Heaven*, but the well-head is *Syon*, and ſo by neglecting *Gods* Houſe they forſook their own mercy; ſo that the nature of the place acquits the *Lord of Hoſts* from the imputation of over-rigorous proceeding, which likewiſe will appear,

Secondly, From the nature of the Judgment, if we ſhall conſider thoſe veins of mercy which run through it, which is the

Second

Second general part, and is included in the ſcope and deſigne of the words of my Text.

And this mercy is viſible in four particulars.

Firſt, In the Judgment it ſelf.

Secondly, In the matter of that Judgment.

Thirdly, In the meaſure of it.

Fourthly, In the diſcovery of the cauſe, and conſequently the means of removing it.

Firſt, It was mercy that they were puniſhed at all, correction being a ſigne of Gods paternal care; *For every Son, whom he loveth, he Chaſteneth; and Scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.* Heb. 12. 6, 7. Immunity from Chaſtiſement and Correction, is the Baſtards, not the Childs prerogative. Gods forbearances are his moſt dreadful Severities; and a proſperous iniquity is the moſt unproſperous condition in the world. It is cruelty, not mercy, to ſuffer men to go on in ſin unpuniſhed, it being that which hardens men in ſin,

and

and conſignes them over to ruine and reprobation. It is a deplorable condition when God ſhall ſay; *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more. Vis indignantis Dei terribilem vocem audire?* will you here the terrible voice of a provoked God? Hear it ſaith *Origen* in that of *Hoſ.* 4.14. *I will not puniſh your Daughters when they commit whoredome.* Never was *Jeruſalem's* caſe ſo deſperate, as when God ſayd to her; *I will make my fury towards thee to reſt, and my jealouſy ſhall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry. Ezek.* 16. 42. That's the firſt beame of mercy; that they are puniſhed.

A *Second*, is that their Puniſhment is in external temporal things, and not in internal and Spiritual, which as they are moſt neceſsary, ſo the loſs is moſt dangerous: Man may be happy without the one, he cannot be ſo without the other. The *Lord of Hoſts* might inſtead of a famine of bread have ſent a famine of the word of God, which is the Souls proper food, and without which it cannot live, which

which he threatens in another Prophet as the moſt dreadful Famine. *Behold the day is come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſend a Famine in the Land, not a Famine for Bread, nor a thirſt for Water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord.* We never fear a dearth if we have Bread-Corne, though we want Apples and Plums. Let God deny us the worldly toyes of earthly enjoyments, if he continue his ſpiritual bleſſings, we cannot be eſteemed miſerable. Am. 8. 11.

A *third* Iſland of mercy appearing in this Sea of miſery, is the meaſure of it. *They had a little, though not much*; God did not take away all, but left them a pittance, as we ſay, enough to keep life and ſoul together. *I will correct thee in meaſure*, ſaith God to his people, *and not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.* If he ſhould have been extreame to have marked what had been done amiſs, he might have utterly deſtroyd them as he did *Sodome* and *Gomorrha*, and ſet them forth as perpetuall examples of divine vengeance, but it was of the Lords mercies that they were not conſumed, becauſe his mercies fail not. There is Jer. 30. 11. Lam. 3. 22.

yet a *fourth* ray of mercy ſhining in this judgment, and that is the diſcovery of the cauſe, which he doth not onely in reſpect of himſelf, for the vindication of his juſtice, but alſo in reſpect to them, that they might provide for deliverance. God by reaſon of that independent dominion, which he hath over all his creatures, which in their very being depend upon him, hath no obligation lying on him, to give any other reaſon of his acting, than his *Sic volo, ſic jubeo*; and therefore it muſt be an act of great mercy, to come to debate and reaſon with his creature, to be content to bring himſelf as it were before mans tribunal, and to plead his cauſe, and make even ſinners his judges, yet ſo he doth frequently; *Come now, and let us reaſon together.* And now, *O Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray you between me and my Vineyard.* Should he have made ſhort worke with them, and diſpatcht them in a moment, yet he would have continued juſt and holy, and he might have juſtified his proceedings; but to ſtoop ſo low as to give an account of his doings,

Eſa. 1. 18.

Eſa. 5. 3.

doings, and to render a reaſon of his ſentence, is a condeſcention of mercy that can be never expreſſed, and never enough admired, or praiſed.

And thus having run through the two Stages of my Text, *Judgment* and *Mercy*; I cannot diſmiſs you without making you partakers of ſome obſervations, which you may improve to your advantage, As,

Firſt, That all the induſtry and labour of man in his calling, is in vain, if God withhold his bleſſing; he may ſow, and reap, and bring in too, he may export, nay import too, and little come of it, if God do but blow upon it. Not but that men may, nay muſt take paines in their vocations. *Adam* even in his innocency and integrity, before his fall, had his employment ſet out to him to dreſs and keep the Garden; much more ſince the fall, when all the Creatures are under the Curſe for the ſin of man; and the earth is ſo farre from yeelding fruit without our labour, that it is often fruitleſs, and barren with it. So that now it is not ſo much

our curſe as our duty, that in the ſweat of our brows we ſhould eat our bread, and he that will not labour, as he doth not deſerve, ſo he hath no promiſe that he ſhall eat: Labour then they muſt, but in that they muſt depend upon God for the ſucceſs, whoſe bleſſing only can make rich. *Moſes* ſaith, *It is not bread that man liveth by only, but by the word of God*, that is his bleſſing; and therefore, *except the Lord build the Houſe and watch the City, mans labour and watching is to no purpoſe*; It is but loſt labour that ye riſe early, and ſo late take reſt, and eat the bread of Careſulneſs if God doth not give ſleep. Joyne then to your honeſt labour, truſt in God, and fear not a good ſucceſs; you have King *Davids* warrant for it. *Truſt in the Lord and do good, and verily thou ſhalt be fed. Pſa.* 37. 3. Let your labours as well as the Creatures for which you labour, be Sanctified by the word of God, and Prayer.

Prov. 10. 22.

Pſa. 127. 1, 2.

1 Tim. 4. 5.

Secondly, The uſe or abuſe, the care or neglect of the Inſtruments of Gods worſhip, is no indifferent thing, no matter of ſlight conſequence,

consequence it procures a blessing or brings down a curse. These Jewes neglect to build Gods House, and God neglects to provide for their Families. They no sooner go up to the Mountain and bring Wood, and begin to build, but from that very day, *God* begins to bless them. Take one instance more; The Arke, which before the building of the Temple, was the dwelling place of *Gods* name, was among the *Philistins*, who profanely insult, and triumph over it, and are smitten with sore diseases, and the hand of *God* is heavy upon them; Afterwards it comes to the *Bethshemites*, who are bold with it and pry into its secrets, and fifty thousand of them are slain for it. After this *Uzzah* toucheth it irreverently, and is struck dead before it; whereas *Obed-Edom* entertains it reverently, and cheerfully, and is blessed in all that he hath. When *God* sends the instruments and means of Religion among a people, it concerns them deeply to look about them; *God* intends something towards them, either of judgment or mercy, and counts it an high

c. 2. 8.

Psa. 74. 7.

1 *Sam* 5.

c. 6. 19.

2. *Sam.* 9. 9.

vers. 6.

indignity, if men think he will do neither
Zeph. 1. 12. good or evil. The Prophet *Iſaiah* compares
Eſa 55. 10. *Gods* Word to Rain, which returns not voyd, but accompliſheth what he pleaſeth, and proſpers in the thing whereunto he ſends it; it either brings up wholſome Herbs, or noyſom Weeds, it either furthers our Salvation, or haſtens our Deſtruction. The Goſpel of
2. Cor. 2. 16. *Chriſt* is a ſavour either of life unto life, or of death unto death. *Gods* Ordinances are all of the ſame nature, with the Lords Supper,
1. Cor. 11. 17. they are either for the better, or for the worſe.
Mat. 11. 23. *Chriſts* coming to a Nation, as to *Capernaum*, is fatal, it either lifts neerer to Heaven, or throws lower into Hell.

Thirdly, The neglect of *Gods* worſhip forfeits all our temporal eſtate; as Tenants that refuſe to do their homage, to perform Suit and Service, and to pay their Land-lords rent, do make their Eſtates lyable to a ſeizure. Theſe outward bleſſings are the appurtenances of *Gods* worſhip; And it is piety onely which hath the promiſes both of this life and that which is to come. Theſe proviſions are properly

properly for Gods Houſehold, and thoſe that wait in the Houſe of the Lord; If a profane perſon that regards not Gods worſhip hath them, it is but at adventures, and they are ſo farre from beeing a bleſſing to him that they become a Snare, making him fall into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drowne men in deſtruction and perdition: ſearch the Chronicles and Annals of the Kings of *Iſrael*, and you ſhall ſtill find thoſe times wherein Religion was advanced, as under *David*, *Solomon*, *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *and Hezekiah*, to be proſperous times, whereas under Idolatrous Kings all things went contrary. So that the beſt way to ſecure what men have, is to employ part of it in *Gods* ſervice: Honour *God* with all thy encreaſe, and thy Eſtate ſhall be increaſed. *Gods* Storehouſe is the beſt Aſſurance-Office; pay thy dues to that, and the reſt will be ſecured to thee. As *Samſon's* ſtrength and glory lay in his Haire, ſo doth the honour and proſperity of your City depend on the true Religion, and ſincere worſhip of *God*, which if it be once deprived of, it

1. *Tim.* 6. 9.

it may ſay with *Phinees* Wife *Ichabod, The glory*
1 *Sam.* 4. 22. *of London is departed.*

Fourthly, *God* expects that our firſt care ſhould be for his ſervice, that his glory and worſhip ſhould have the precedency in our thoughts. Theſe *Jews* upon their return home from *Babylon*, ſet up their own Houſes, fell to husbandry, plowed and ſowed their lands, they thought it not time to undertake ſo coſtly a work as building the Temple; and fleſh and blood might have thought that delay excuſable if not reaſonable, but *God* counts it matter of juſt exception, and ſends them two Prophets to reprove them for it; what an obvious excuſe had they? That that *God* who had dwelt ſo long of old in a Tabernacle, and was now worſhipped at his new created Altar, would bear with them if they firſt built their own Houſes, intending afterwards to build his with greater care and coſt; but what ſaith *God* to them, *Verſ.* 4. *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your Ceiled Houſes* (not covered only, but Ceiled with Cedar, as the Chaldee renders it, arched and garniſhed as the Greek) *and*

my

my Houſe to lye waſte. The man after Gods own heart was of another mind, he would not come into his Houſe, nor go up unto his bed, nor give ſleep to his eyes, or ſlumber to his eye-lids, until he had found out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Noah's* firſt care after he came out of the Arke, was, not to build an Houſe for himſelfe, but an Altar for Gods worſhip; he pleads not neceſſity of preſerving ſtore, nor ſtays till the creatures are multiplyed, but takes of every clean creature that came out of the Arke, and offers them to God. True Faith teacheth to prefer God before our ſelves; the World as it is inferiour in worth to Religion, ſo it muſt be in our repute and reſpects; *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and the righteouſneſs thereof*, was the councel of our *Saviour*. God will crown ſuch early piety with encreaſe of ſtore, *for all theſe things ſhall be added unto you:* If the Widow make a little Cake for the Prophet firſt, and bring it to him, her Barrel of Meal ſhall never waſt, nor her Cruiſe of Oyl fail.

Pſa. 132. 3-5.

2 *Kings.* 17. 14.

Thirdly, If the not repairing the Houſe of God be ſo ſeverely puniſhed, what ſhall become of thoſe that demoliſh his Houſes: *If the Innocent be ſcarcely ſaved, where ſhall the wicked and ſinner appear?* is S. *Peter's* way of arguing. If the labours and hopes of theſe *Jewes*, who onely ſuffered the Temple to lye in its ruines, come to little, certainly theirs ſhall come to nothing, or at leaſt worſe than nothing, eternal deſtruction, that are the inſtruments of ruining it. If God ſhall deſtroy him that defileth the Temple of God, what ſhall he do to them that deſtroy it? If *Ananias* and *Sapphira* withholding that which was their own, were accounted Church-robbers, and puniſhed with ſudden death; what a ſevere revenger will God be againſt thoſe that rob the Temple of that which hath been dedicated to it by others; *Chriſt* would not ſuffer Gods Houſe, which was to be called an Houſe of prayer to all Nations, to be made a den of thieves, by prophane uſage of it, much leſs will he endure to have it deſtroyed after he hath reformed it; this is ſacriledge, and that the

Pet. 4. 18.

1 *Cor.* 3 17.

the Apoſtle ranks with Idolatry, as being full out as evil, if not worſe than it; for what Idolatry but pollutes, ſacriledge quite pulls down; and eaſier it is to new hallow a Temple polluted, than to build a new one out of an heap of ſtones.

Once more, *Sixthly*, If the flood of Gods indignation ariſeth ſo high againſt thoſe that ſuffer the material Temple dedicated to his ſervice to be waſte, how ſhall it rage againſt them that do not repair his ſpiritual Temples, their own ſouls and bodies which have been conſecrated to him in Baptiſm; for ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *Ye are the Temples of the living God*, as God hath ſayd, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them:* And God takes more delight in theſe, than in the other. For, *thus ſaith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, whoſe name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit.* And he refuſeth all the ſervices that are done him in his external Temple, as an abomination; if the ſpiritual Temple be defiled with ſin and demoliſhed by iniquity. Sin not onely defiles

2 Cor. 6. 16.

Eſa. 57. 15.

but deſtroyes theſe Houſes of God, let us therefore build them againe by our ſincere Repentance and Reformation, let us cleanſe them from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit: we cry, ſhame! to ſee a Church turned into a Barn, or Stable; to ſee a Chriſtian all for the world is no better ſight; Let us take heed that we do not make this Houſe of God a Den of Theeves, a Brothel Houſe for uncleaneſs, a Cage for unclean Birds, but let us adorne it with all the grace of Gods Spirit, for Holineſs becometh the Lords Houſe for ever. Eſpecially ſince the ruines of this Spiritual Houſe will draw with it the ruines of the Material, as God threatens the *Jewes* to do to their
Jer. 7. 12, 14 Temple, as he did unto *Shiloh* for the wickedneſs of his people *Iſrael*.

And now to cloſe up all. If any man ſhall think this concernes him not; becauſe God ſends no Prophets now to tell us that for ſuch and ſuch ſins, God ſends ſuch and ſuch Judgments. Let him know, that *all theſe things* that are recorded in the Prophets, *happened unto them for examples, and are written*

written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. 1 *Cor.* 10. 11. when therefore we may ſee a paralel of ſins and puniſhments with thoſe regiſtred in ſacred writ: we may without preſumption conclude that thoſe ſins were the provoking cauſe of thoſe Judgments. And here the Paralel is ſo viſible, that he that runneth may read; and I make no queſtion but your owne meditations have run Paralel with my diſcourſe ſo that moſt of my labour that way is already ſaved.

For is it not the general complaint, and out-cry of this City, that there is an univerſal decay of Trade? Do not the Merchants complain? *we looke for much*, and that upon good ground; for we have ſent forth our Ships richly laden and ventured them on long and dangerous Voyages; *but loe it comes to little*, our Ships return not, or if they do, the income doth not anſwer the expence, our Commodities hardly yeeld what they coſt. Doth not the Shop-keeper complain? *we look for much*, having taken Houſes at great

Prices and Furniſhed our ſhops with rich wares, *but loe it comes to little*, there are few Buyers, and but ſmall gaines, we can ſcarce pay our rents. Doth not the Handicrafts man complain *we look for much*, for we labour hard and work good and ſufficient wares; *but loe it comes to little*; The Shop-keeper will not buy but at his own rates; ſo that we have little more than our labour for our Paines. And that which adds to the unhappineſs of all this is, that every one of theſe is apt to impute this Calamity to any thing, rather than the right cauſe and ſo hinder themſelves of the true remedy, becauſe they will not underſtand the true cauſe of the diſtemper: Either a Forreigne Nations ingroſſing Trade abroad, or the Magiſtrates neglect of Trade at home muſt bear the blame; who is it that conſiders that *Gods Houſe lyes waſt, while every man runs to his owne Houſe?* Gods Houſe ſaid I, nay Gods Houſes, how many of them lie in their ruines, in their rubbiſh? for we muſt not fancy that God hath no Houſes now, and that becauſe that Temple at *Jeruſalem* together with it's Ceremonial

monial worſhip is aboliſhed that God hath not adopted any other places, which he will own for his; for before the foundations of that Temple were laid, and ſince they have been razed, and one ſtone not left on another which was not thrown downe, God always had a place appropriated to his worſhip, and where he was pleaſed to afford a more gracious Preſence than elſewhere. Even in Paradiſe, *Adam* had a place to preſent himſelfe before God. Which was called *Gods Preſence or Face. Gen.* 3. 8. From which he hid himſelfe, for from Gods general preſence nothing can be hid, but all things are naked and open. And his Sons out of Paradiſe had their places where to bring their Sacrifices, *Gen.* 4. 3. From which when *Cain* ſtood excommunicate for the Murther of his Brother *Abel*, he is ſaid *to be caſt out from the preſence of the Lord. Vers.* 16. *Abraham*, beſides Altars in ſeveral places, planted a grove, *Gen.* 21. 23. To be a fixt place for Gods worſhip, for there he called on the name of the Lord. And ſo it is expounded

Ainsworth in l. c.

ded by one that was no great friend to our Churches. And afterwards when he is commanded to offer his Son *Isaac*, the very Mountain is preſcribed him, *Gen.* 21. 1. and Gods title to it ceaſed not with that one act, for there *Solomons* Temple was afterwards built, which God in my Text calls his Houſe; nor did it then begin, if we may believe the general conſent of the Jewiſh Rabbins, who aſſert that to be the place where *Cain* and *Abel*, nay *Adam* himſelf offered: When *Jacob* conſecrated that place where he ſaw the Viſion of the Ladder reaching to Heaven, *Gen.* 28. 18. he called it *Beth-el*, *Gods Houſe*, the ground of which both conſecration and name is rendred, *Verſ.* 16, 17. *Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not, how dreadful is this place? This is none other, but the Houſe of God, the gate of Heaven.* So that Gods Houſes began not with the Temple of *Solomon*, no nor that ambulatory Temple of *Moſes* the Tabernacle, which is peculiarly by *David* called *Gods Houſe*; nor while they were in being, did they ingroſs that title to themſelves, for there were both in *Jeruſalem*

Maimony in miſnoth l. 8. and in Treatiſe of the Temple, c. 2. ſ. 2.

Pſa. 66. 13.

ſalem and in other places of the Land no ſmall number of Synagogues for the People to reſort unto for their Devotions, which are called *Synagogues of God*, and *Houſes of God*, in the Plural Number: and theſe were Frequented by *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles as well as the Temple. And ſince the Deſtruction of that Temple, God was never deſtitute of Houſes for his Worſhip. True it is that in the Primitive times of Chriſtianity, when they had not the Publick allowance and Countenance of authority, they could exerciſe their Religion only in Private, yet then they had places for the Saints to meet in for Divine Worſhip, ſuch were the ὑπερῶα, the upper-roomes mentioned ſo frequently in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and diſtinguiſhed by St. *Paul* from Private Houſes. 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. *Have ye not Houſes to Eat and Drink, or deſpiſe ye the Church of God?* underſtood by moſt Interpreters both ancient and modern of the publick place of Gods Worſhip; thoſe perhaps not ſo ſumptous and ſtately as afterwards, the Churches mean Condition and the worlds envy

Pſa. 74. 8. *Pſa.* 83. 12.

would not permit that, but ſuch as their Poverty would allow they had. But when it pleaſed God to raiſe up Kings and Emperours to favour ſincerely the Chriſtian Faith, Churches were then erected in all places, and no coſt ſpared, nothing thought to deere which that way was ſpent and theſe were called κυριακὰι, the Lords from whence the *Scots Kirke* and our *Engliſh Church* doth proceed, and is the ſame title which is given to his day *Rev* 1. 10; And not improperly ſince we find the place and time of Gods Worſhip Joyned together by the Holy Ghoſt in Scripture, *Ye ſhall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary*; and then what the Son of *Syrach* ſaith of one may be applied to the other, and we may ſay *why doth one place excel another*? by the knowledg of the Lord they are diſtinguiſhed, and ſome of them he hath made high places and hallowed them, and ſome of them he hath made ordinary places. As the one is the Day of reſt, and when we hallow it, it is called *Gods reſt*, ſo the other when Conſecrated to his name is called *Gods reſt*, *This is my reſt for ever*. And ſuch

Lev. 19. 30. 8. 26. 2.

Eccleſiaſticus 33. 7.

Pſal. 132. 14.

ſuch were thoſe Houſes in this City, which are now waſt, for they were Dedicated and Conſecrated toGods ſervice,in them the Saints were aſſembled, the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt* was Preached, The Lords Holy Name was Invocated, and the Sacraments ofthe new covenant duly adminiſtred, to all which *Chriſt* under the Goſpel hath Promiſed a gracious preſence. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them. Mat.* 18.20.And to this promiſe he hath ſet to his ſeale by Converting to, and Confirming many a Soule in the doctrine of *Jeſus Chriſt* from theſe places. Now, that theſe are waſt, is as legible, as if writ in Text; but where to lay the blame is not perhaps ſo eaſily diſcovered. To impute it to the Magiſtracy of this City, this Honorable Bench would be no leſs then *Scandalum Magnatum.* Their Zeale in general is Sufficiently evidenced by this place wherein we are now Aſſembled; and in particular many of them either by actual contribution, or ſubſcription,have teſtified abundantly their reſpects to theſe Houſes: And of the Commo-

nalty, I have reaſon to have as good an opinion, if their abilities were conſonant to their deſires, when I conſider their ancient zeal while the City was Flouriſhing to theſe *Houſes of God*, how they opened their hands, and filled with Bleſſings many Churches both at home and abroad, both in their own and forreign Countries; yet even the beſt Saylers may be becalmed and want the gale of a Prophet to encourage them, to go up to the Mountain and bring wood, &c. Your hearts I am confident are good, it is but ſetting to your hands, and the worke will be done. Do but begin, and never feare the reproach of not having wherewithal to finiſh; Do but lay the firſt ſtone, and never diſtruſt the providence of that God who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginnner and Finiſher of every good worke. When *Moſes* was about Building the Tabernacle, his charge was no more but this, every one that is of a willing heart, let him bring into the offering of the Lord, and they brought in ſo faſt both men and women, that there was too much; and a proclamation was made.

Exod. 35. 5.

made in the Camp that they ſhould bring in no more. When ſtuffe was to be provided for the Temple, King *David* left it at large: *Whoſo is willing to conſecrate his Service to the Lord.* and both Kings, Princes and People offered abundantly and willingly, inſomuch that he for himſelfe and them giveth thanks to the Lord in this forme; *Who am I, and what is my People; that wee ſhould offer ſo willingly?* Do but lead the way, and I doubt not but God will ſtir up the hearts of others to follow; there is not a Soul, that feareth God but the Zeal of Gods Houſe will eat it up, there will be many a true hearted *Araunah*, who will offer not his land but his Timber for the Houſe of the Lord; The Rich out of his abundance will give more, and the poore Widdow out of her Penury will give a mite. Even the labourer out of his hire, the ſervant out of his wages, and the ſouldiers out of their pay, will dedicate ſomthing, as the two Generals of *Saul* and *Davids* armies did. The Living will lay up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come,

1 Chron. 29. 5.

viii 14.

2. Chr. 26 28.

that they may lay hold on Eternal life, and the dying, (I perſwade my ſelfe) will not make a will, but *Gods Houſe* ſhall have a Legacy in it. Even, the covetous uſurer will out of compliance with the times, if not out of remorſe of conſcience throw down ſome of his Silver with *Judas* into the Temple: Do but propoſe the meanes, and you have a great and gracious King, the Churches nurſing Father, and faiths defender, who will promote the worke, and rather than it ſhall not go on, will with his Countryman *Conſtantine* the no leſs religious than Magnificent Emperour, be content to carry ſtones on his own ſhoulders towards it. You have a Loyal and Religious Parliament the Churches Nurſing Mother; ready to enact whatſoever ſhall be propounded to them for the advancement of ſo great and glorious a worke; nay do but ſet earneſtly about it, and God himſelfe will go before you to make the crooked places ſtreight, and to break in pieces the Gates of Braſs, and to cut in ſunder the bars of Iron, that is, to remove all rubs and impediments, which would

Iſa. 45. 2.

would hinder the foundation of the Temple to be laid: and he alſo will lay the head-ſtone thereof with ſhouting, ſaying, Grace, Grace unto it. I cannot conclude better then with the exhortation of this Prophet. *c* 2. *v.* 4. *Be now ſtrong O Zerubbabel, ſaith the Lord, and be ſtrong O Joſuah Son of Joſedech the high Prieſt and be ſtrong all ye People of the Land, ſaith the Lord, and worke for I am with you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſt*; With you by my helpe, and aſſiſtance; with you by my care and acceptance; with you by my reward, and recompence: for then will I fill theſe Houſes with Glory, dwelling and having a delight in them, and in them will I give peace, and in them will I furniſh you with plenty too: and then happy would be the People that are in ſuch a Caſe yea bleſſed will this City be, which hath this *Lord of Hoſts* to be their God. Now to this *Lord of Hoſts*, Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons but one Infinite God, be aſcribed in his holy Temple all Praiſe Honour and Thankſgiving now and for ever, *Amen*.

c. 2. 7. v. 9. vers. 19.

FINIS.